

CITY COMMISSION WORKSHOP  
DOWNTOWN MASTER PLAN  
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 26, 2002 - 2:00 P.M.

CITY HALL  
CITY COMMISSION CONFERENCE ROOM - 8<sup>TH</sup> FLOOR  
100 NORTH ANDREWS AVENUE  
FORT LAUDERDALE, FLORIDA

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**PRESENTATION OF THE PRELIMINARY DOWNTOWN MASTER PLAN**

Mayor Naugle called the meeting to order at approximately 2:08 p.m. He stated that the purpose of today's meeting was to see a presentation of the preliminary findings for the Downtown Master Plan.

The City Manager stated that in today's presentation the Commission would be able to see the progress which had been made in the Downtown Master Plan. He then proceeded to turn the meeting over to Bruce Chatterton, Planning and Zoning Services Manager.

Bruce Chatterton stated that the purpose of this meeting was not only to present the results of Phase I of the Downtown Consolidated Master Plan, but to have a reality check before proceeding to the next phase. He explained it was important to make sure that key issues had not been left out or if there were other areas which should have been explored further. He announced that Ken Greenberg was the overall Project Manager for this project, but that he was unable to be at today's meeting due to a schedule conflict. He further stated that Neil Kittredge, Consultant with Byer, Blinder Belle would be making today's presentation.

Neil Kittredge explained that they had created a shorter version of the power point presentation that had been shown to the public on October 3, 2002. He further stated that this was the completion of Phase I which was the \$100,000 contract for Keith and Schnars, Byer, Blinder Belle and Ken Greenberg. He continued stating that the conclusion of Phase I included the public workshop which confirmed a great deal of their earlier thinking and gave them encouragement to proceed forward. Mr. Kittredge announced that the City Commission had approved funding for Phase II.

Commissioner Moore left the meeting at approximately 2:35 p.m. and returned 2:37 p.m.

Mr. Kittredge explained that they had looked at what they believed was the need for a Downtown Master Plan. He stated that they wanted to create a very strong, compelling vision for the Downtown that everyone could support, including the neighborhoods, developers, and local businesses. He explained that they wanted something that had a broad buy-in from a wide spectrum of people. He further stated that the key to making the plan work was to have consensus, and then they could proceed forward with the smaller elements of implementation.

Mr. Kittredge stated that the next important item was economic sustainability for the Downtown and maintenance of the ongoing growth. He explained that the area was undergoing a current spurt of residential development and needed to have a role within the larger region and within Broward County. Mr. Kittredge stated that Downtown was the urban and civic hub of Broward County, but yet had lost out in population growth to surrounding communities. He stated that it was important as to what the role of Downtown should be for the future in relation to population and economic growth relative to other town centers and suburban areas.

Mr. Kittredge explained that they had discussed creating a mixed-use Downtown and incorporating housing of variable incomes, commercial use, cultural, retail and office and use the Master Plan to make this a reality. He further stated that the idea of creating a linked network of pedestrian spaces and parks had also been discussed. He continued stating that it was important to improve linkages from the Downtown to the various surrounding neighborhoods making it more walkable, and also to provide connections to the beach through various means of transportation. Mr. Kittredge remarked that one of the

biggest challenges facing this project was the parking situation, which had created certain visual and aesthetic impacts on the area that needed to be confronted. Mr. Kittredge explained that the Master Plan needed to be used as an umbrella by taking the vision for the City, which coordinated a lot of on-going planning for transportation, infrastructure, open space, park systems, and greenways, and fitting it into a larger unified concept.

Mr. Kittredge stated that the Master Plan finally needed to be utilized to identify projects, investments, and opportunities for public/private partnerships and other initiatives to make it work. He explained that the schedule for the project was 10 months ending in June/July, 2003 and was built around public workshops. He further stated that the first public workshop was a listening session which provided them with people's responses to their initial findings. The next workshop would be to review their options and ideas, and the last workshop would be to review the final plan. Mr. Kittredge stated that they also wanted to have focus workshops once they began looking at particular neighborhoods and work with them more intimately. He further stated that extensive meetings were being held with stakeholders. He also stated they wanted to create public access to the documents, and therefore, this report would be available on the City's website.

Mr. Kittredge explained that in order to understand the City, they did a "swot analysis," which included the City's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. He further explained that first they looked at the City and the region and what role the Downtown played in relation to the County. He stated that in the urban pattern of South Florida, there was a unique situation of a linear City 10 to 20 miles wide, which was trapped between the Ocean and the Everglades. He stated it was suburban, but had downtown centers and hubs running its length. Essentially, the ecological boundary of the Everglades created an urban growth boundary, which was the limit of new growth, and it began in-filling the older suburbs and returning to the older town centers. Many of the surrounding communities, new and old, received a lot of population growth within the last 10 years. He proceeded to give some examples as follows:

Coral Springs	-	50% growth
Pompano Beach	-	8% growth
Sunrise	-	30% growth
Hollywood	-	14% growth
Fort Lauderdale	-	2% growth

Mr. Kittredge stated that there needed to be a mutual discussion about what they wanted the City's growth to be in the future, rather than letting it continue on its present trend. In terms of economic growth, Mr. Kittredge stated there was a lot of commercial, office, and economic development in that 10-year period.

Mr. Kittredge proceeded to show a map explaining how the Downtown was plugged into the region through transportation networks. He explained that they noticed over time that the highway and railroad networks let the Downtown and moved into more open areas. The original Flagler Rail Line was near Stranahan Park and was the center of town, but eventually the new rail line moved out to the suburban areas and lost the essential connection and activity driver of being the center of town. He stated the same thing happened with the highways. US1 originally had a strong relationship with the City and over time bigger and faster highways moved west, so the main means of accessing Downtown at the present time was on the east/west boulevards, three of which connected with the Downtown in approximately one-mile increments. Those boulevards were Sunrise, Broward and Davie. He stated there was the water transportation, the airports, and the port being the reason this area was the hub of the County.

Mr. Kittredge stated that relationship of the Downtown to the beach was through Sunrise Boulevard, Las Olas Boulevard, and A1A as the major connections, along with the water bus.

Mr. Kittredge proceeded to show a map of the study area and explained that it corresponded to the RAC boundary. As they proceed, he explained they were mindful of the surrounding communities,

connections, and relationships across the boundaries and were not intending to “color within the lines.” He explained the study area was approximately ½ mile to 1 mile wide of a 2 mile north/south area which comprised 725 acres and 135 city blocks. He stated they were curious about how big that area was in comparison to other cities. He explained they had overlaid this area onto a few other urban areas they liked and were familiar with which were Savannah and South Beach. He stated they noticed in those cities that one could get a quite dense, highly liveable, residential, and commercial mixed-use downtown area within the same area which was walkable from one side to the other.

Mr. Kittredge then proceeded to show the zoning pattern overlaid over Downtown and stated there was a large, general, mixed-use City center area which spread far to the north and south surrounded by transition zones and special use zones. He explained they also looked at the area not only as it was laid out on the map, but as they sensed it to be perceived as it broke down into different neighborhoods. He stated they noticed it to have a strong sense of a dense high-rise core bounded centrally and close to the river, and more of neighborhood areas to the north and south. He stated there were also some special districts such as Himmarshee Village and the arts and entertainment areas. He believed this could be referred to as the “mental map” of the Downtown area.

Mr. Kittredge stated they also reviewed the pattern of vegetation within the City and found there was a great sparsity of tree coverage in the center of Downtown compared to some of the neighborhoods where there was an incredible density of tree coverage. He explained this vegetation had an intense effect on the climate and on the micro-climatic environment.

Mr. Kittredge explained that they had taken a quick anecdotal look at the real estate market and would be undertaking a study with Paul Lambert. He stated that initial findings would be presented next month. They basically discovered that residential was the strong market, and there was an untapped demand for middle income, lower income, and work force housing, in addition to the luxury residential market which presently existed.

Mr. Kittredge stated that there were many strengths in the area. He explained there were “pockets of street life,” which were areas of Downtown which were successful in bringing together activity, pedestrian life, successful business, and retail. He stated that Las Olas was the most successful example. Other areas were beginning to be just as successful. He continued stating that the downtown portion of Las Olas had been redesigned with new streetscape, shops and restaurants, but was only active during certain hours of the day due to its domination by office workers. He explained that one of the benefits of mixed-use was that you activated the area during different hours of the day.

Mr. Kittredge continued stating that the Riverfront Complex was another successful retail area, but it was more oriented towards tourists and visitors, and did not have much to draw the local residents. He stated that Himmarshee Village was more of a “night spot,” and needed more daytime activity. He also stated that Stranahan Park was a lunch time spot and needed different activities at different hours. Mr. Kittredge remarked that they noticed that these different little pockets were separated from each other, and there was no chance for a combined experience which would bring together all the assets of the area.

Mr. Kittredge remarked that another important strength was the key institutions which were community anchored such as the Performing Arts Center, FAU, and the Art Museum. He explained these were serving as long-term anchors having self-contained populations and added to the vitality of the City, which coincidentally were located along the same corridor, but yet separated from each other. Another strength was the Riverwalk which was one of the few areas where green spaces were connected, but in some areas it was very narrow, and therefore, had limitations. Another incredible strength of the Downtown was the proximity of residential neighborhoods. One of the unique things about this City was that you did not have “belt highways” which divided the City from its surrounding communities. Mr. Kittredge continued stating that another strength was the great residential real estate market which would be a driver for change and was transforming the City.

Mr. Kittredge stated that there was a lot of under-utilized land which was a weakness, but they were referring to it as a strength because of the large potential for growth.

Mr. Kittredge proceeded to discuss the weaknesses of the Downtown. He stated that there was a shortage of green space. Holiday Park was a great asset and there was only 3% land area as green space which was extremely low.

He explained they had charted a 5-minute walking distance from the existing parks, and there were areas which did not have any coverage in terms of access to green space. Another weakness were the barriers such as the river. In the historical photographs of the City, the river was the center of town and was the working waterfront, which joined the north and the south. Now, although it was a narrow river, its accessibility to pedestrians was very limited. Mr. Kittredge continued stating that another barrier was the rail line which was the "hub" of the City, but now the City turned its back on it, and it was beginning to form a barrier of a series of uses which were creating different neighborhoods making areas "on the right side of the tracks" or "the wrong side of the tracks."

Mr. Kittredge stated that other barriers were major streets and boulevards which were pedestrian barriers. He continued stating they realized there were some standard roadway designs based on County-wide standards, which were not suited to an urban environment, and they needed to meet with the engineers and policymakers to see if this could be remedied. He explained that a combination of traffic calming, signal timing, and landscaping could make lesser highway conditions and more urban like boulevards. Another weakness was the lack of connections to the river. He proceeded to show areas on a map.

Mr. Kittredge remarked that another key weakness was "introverted projects." He explained that many things were being built in the downtown area which did not recognize the public space. It was something which naturally happened when developers came into a situation where there was not a recognizable public realm to relate to, and no visible vision. Internalized communities were being created which did not have a strong relationship to the sidewalks.

Commissioner Moore asked if a developer built a project with amenities where the owners could feel safe within their own environment, what was wrong with that type of development. Mr. Kittredge stated that once a series of such projects were assembled in an area, they did not work together to build a community and no exterior street environment was being created. He continued stating that if everyone had a vision of what this type of liveable city could be, this would become a natural economic opportunity for developments to take advantage of it and become a part of it.

Commissioner Moore asked for an example of a downtown city with the same type of density and environment that was similar to what was being proposed. Mayor Naugle stated that an example could be the Summit. Mr. Kittredge stated an example could be cities such as Savannah and Charleston which had a history. Commissioner Moore asked for an example of a newly developed city. Mr. Kittredge stated that in a way this City had a history to build on and had an older history of pedestrian spaces and a walkable downtown to look back upon. He explained that some of the cities retained more of the historic fabric, but this City could reclaim its past pedestrian life.

Commissioner Moore asked which city had gone through a redevelopment in the manner being proposed. Mr. Kittredge replied that he could not think of a city at the moment.

Mark LaFerrier, Keith and Schnars, stated that he was part of this project and an example which came to his mind was Seattle or Bellevue, which was west of Seattle, which developed over the last 20 years in the fashion being described for this project.

Bruce Chatterton stated that Charlotte, North Carolina, was also a combination of redevelopment and old together. Mayor Naugle stated that an example for this City was the Avenue Lofts which was a

combination of residential and commercial. He continued stating that a small step was taken with Summit which contained a small amount of retail on the first floor and was a better development. Commissioner Smith remarked that The Waverly was an even better development.

Mr. Kittredge stated that as new developments occurred, the City was beginning to recognize its density and that street level activities could occur. Commissioner Smith stated that San Diego also had light rail. Mr. Kittredge stated that San Diego was a good example. He further stated that Seattle was influencing its outlying areas.

Mr. Kittredge further stated that there had been some effort in Flagler Heights to create a vision regarding what that area could be like as a combined neighborhood, and he felt they could begin thinking more holistically about the downtown as a whole. He continued stating that in their next presentation, he would include some case studies.

Mr. Kittredge stated that another weakness of the Downtown was the impact of parking which was a great challenge. Due to the water table, larger structures were being erected and that was due to some of the new projects and the lenders' requirements for higher parking ratios. He explained they had to look at this in terms of building types, as well as in terms of parking strategies for the area. He stated that not only should one think of ways to distribute parking in smaller chunks, but one should think about how to better integrate parking into the streetscape so it would not create stretches of "dead street" or massive structures which affected the Downtown visually.

Mr. Kittredge continued stating there were some radical scale juxtapositions in the area. He gave the example of the Stranahan House and its surrounding areas. He stated another weakness was the weakness of the public realm, including the lack of landscape creating a harsh climate, lack of streetscape, and lack of activity on the streets.

Mr. Kittredge explained that when you took all these factors together and began thinking of early concepts and opportunities in moving forward, you needed to join together all the pieces and make them work together as a whole. He further explained that one of their major concepts was to put effort into what they were calling the Las Olas Corridor as a whole, which shifted to Second Street and led to the Performing Arts Center. All the elements were great assets and were in close proximity to each other, and they needed to have them all work together. This could be accomplished by overcoming the barriers between the faces and making them more diverse. Mr. Kittredge stated that the corridor was next to Riverwalk which was another asset. Therefore, by creating and improving all the perpendicular connections from the active streets to the Riverwalk, one would be able to create an ensemble.

Mr. Kittredge stated that they felt a wonderful idea was to create a pedestrian bridge over the river, which would be a light weight operable one that could move quickly. He showed on the map the possible location for such a bridge and stated it would complete the loop of the Riverwalk giving access to both sides of the river. He explained there were other places where this bridge could be located. He further stated that it could be an architectural icon for the City giving identity and character to the Downtown.

Mr. Kittredge stated that they needed to look at how to expand the green space on the south side of the River. He explained there were still opportunities on the south side to create some retail life on the Riverwalk. He stated there was the need to create connections between the parks and green spaces, and one way to do that was to create a Flagler Greenway paralleling the railway and using the under-used strips of land or narrow service roads running along the tracks. He further stated this was the missing link in a larger system of regional county-wide trails.

Mr. Kittredge stated that in addition to the greenway, there was the idea of increasing the landscaping on the City streets, and creating walkable areas.

Mr. Kittredge proceeded to show on a map the gateways to the City which corresponded with areas that

had opportunity for redevelopment. He proceeded to show that different parts of the City had different characteristics. He stated they felt there was a dense ½ mile square downtown core, along with some transitional zones. He further stated they were thinking of “character areas” which could have dense development, but would be composed of different types of buildings.

The City Manager stated that this was not unlike what the ULI did along the beach, and there was a consistency in regard to the approach.

Mr. Kittredge stated that they did not want to imply that this had to deal with numbers, but more to do with the feeling of the neighborhood and the massing of buildings that could occur. He proceeded to show slides of how all the elements could be brought together.

Mr. Kittredge further stated they had studied different building types from other cities and examples were shown of Coral Gables and the Miracle Mile. Various other examples were shown, including Vancouver. He stated that high-rises were not necessarily bad things, and the important features were how they met the ground.

Mr. Kittredge emphasized the climate of the City and what great opportunity it provided to create landscaped streets and parks. He then proceeded to show photographs of how parking was dealt with in some other cities. He reiterated that on-street parking could provide a large capacity for parking and created safer streets, and also provide the opportunity for quick-stop shopping at retail areas which helped to reactivate streets. He then showed slides of how everything could come together.

Mr. Kittredge reiterated that in order to capture a larger share of regional growth and make the City a “hub,” they needed to increase the residential population of the Downtown area paralleled with supporting amenities.

Mr. Kittredge remarked that these were their first cut of a set of planning principles they would refine and ask for input on. He also stated that some of the focus areas they were thinking about were zones which had particular development opportunity or potential, which might create important gateways to the City.

Commissioner Moore asked if the boundary they were working from was described to them as the RAC. Mr. Kittredge stated that the boundary of the study was given to them, and they were sticking to it literally, but were not doing planning without considering its surroundings. Commissioner Moore reiterated that he often stated that the Downtown area was figured only for downtown, and did not go up the Avenue of the Arts to Sunrise Boulevard. He stated that when it came to studying the redevelopment of the community, the connections, and the global approach, this was always left out. He asked how this could be corrected. He stated that he felt Sunrise Boulevard was another street which needed an opening.

Bruce Chatterton stated that the answer was that it had not been left out. He explained that they had started with the RAC, but did not tie the hands of the consultants in terms of working with or looking at other areas. He further stated they had chosen the RAC as the boundary because if the Commission requested more units from the County in the future, this plan could be the basis for that.

Commissioner Moore stated he wanted to stress the matter of Sunrise Boulevard. He further stated that with the 7<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue Connectors, it seemed they were being short-sighted on what the RAC was comprised of, and if they were going to use that corridor as a connector to bring traffic into the Downtown, then it should be part of the redevelopment and part of the vision.

Bruce Chatterton stated that perhaps part of the big picture of the vision for the Downtown was that they needed to expand the RAC itself and possibly have one north.

Mayor Naugle stated that he felt this pointed out the fact that they had started out with the RAC, but

realizing they wanted to cover other areas and would expand. There were going to be midtown improvements, but there were also other contracts and other consultants.

Commissioner Moore emphasized that if the "dots were being connected," they should proceed to 7<sup>th</sup> and 9th Avenues with the concept. Commissioner Smith stated that these boundaries did not have to be adhered to forever, and they needed to be flexible. He felt some of the boundaries should be changed and thought that on the south side of the River with the City Center, it should not be the biggest building and the residents fancied themselves more suburban in character and did not want it there. He felt some changes should be made to bring the City Center closer to the River because most people did not use this as their mental map, and it scared residents in some areas. Commissioner Hutchinson stated that for her the core of Downtown was the City Center, and never looked at it extending out. Commissioner Smith stated that she could say that, but that wasn't the rule and things had to be changed legally.

Cecelia Hollar, Director of Construction Services, stated that the original vision was for the City Center to be closer to the core, but it had gotten changed due to interested parties and property owners. Mr. Kittredge remarked that they were not thinking of the whole thing as the City Center. Commissioner Moore stated if they wanted people doing speculative purchases, he wanted to expand the boundary to 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue. Commissioner Smith asked how this could be accomplished.

Ms. Hollar explained that if the boundary of the RAC was changed that would be okay, but if the internal zoning districts were changed that would be something which they would have to work with from this plan, and as an end result be the basis for the changes. The northwest RAC did not encompass some of the portion, and the question was whether they wanted to create a local activity center, which would be something easier to achieve.

Commissioner Moore left the meeting at approximately 3:26 p.m. and returned at 3:28 p.m. Commissioner Smith asked at what point did the Commission need to make the commitment regarding the City Center zoning heading south should be moved further north.

The City Attorney explained that it would have to be done after a plan had been adopted, and then the zoning could be changed.

Bruce Chatterton explained there was no plan at this time, but there was a Phase I and ideas.

Ms. Hollar explained there was a new tool which was recently developed by the County that was a local land use designation which allowed for the mixed-use, and gave flexibility. She explained this could be done as part of a land use amendment, and that they needed to update their plan.

Mayor Naugle stated that the communities should be able to give input as to whether they wanted to be included in an RAC. Ms. Hollar stated that the question was whether the consultant could help in reviewing this. Mr. Kittredge stated that their scope now was the boundary given them. He explained they could do a more intense look within the boundary and include as part of the study, the connections and linkages to the various surrounding neighborhoods and simplified concepts, and how they related to the RAC.

Mayor Naugle stated that the project was half-way, and the matter of changing the boundaries should have been brought up before it began.

Bruce Chatterton stated that through the efforts of the northwest CRA, they were doing things now with the design and planning studies which were underway, and the issue would be coordination. Mr. Kittredge stated that they could work with those consultants.

Commissioner Katz stated there was an excellent group of people working in the CRA area and working



at an intense detailed level. She believed coordination would be important and everyone was a part of the enterprise. Commissioner Moore felt that everyone was working out of a departmental view. He was glad to see in the consultant's presentation the plans for the greenways. Mr. Kittredge remarked they were trying to integrate things the best they could with all the information they were receiving regarding all the studies in the areas.

Mayor Naugle thanked everyone and stated he recognized many faces from the October meeting. He announced that the Commission had approved on November 19, 2002, a portion of the funds for Phase II, but part of it was contingent upon the DDA funding.

Commissioner Smith asked when the rules were being changed for the beach, there was a study underway and the planning changes could not be finished until the study was completed, but if there was zoning in progress and people were on notice about the consideration for changes, could this be done south of the River.

The City Attorney stated there was a mild disagreement in his office as to what the previous and current philosophies were in regard to zoning in progress, and when it starts. He stated there could be zoning in progress, but whether they needed to do it to identify what they were going to change could be the question. He explained if an application came in after the zoning in progress, it should be finished before the new regulation was put into place, and it would get approved in the normal course of events. You could not drag your feet in order to get the new regulation. He explained it was a "race to the finish line." He reiterated that you could not apply a new regulation which had not yet been adopted. Commissioner Smith asked then what good was zoning in progress. The City Attorney stated that it normally only took 60 days to get the regulation in place, and it took longer for someone to come in and apply for a building permit for a major project.

Commissioner Smith stated that it was a matter of courtesy to put people on notice that the government was taking action. Mayor Naugle explained that normally they would advertise that a certain action was going to be discussed by the Commission, and then if there was a consensus to pursue it, they would then establish the zoning in progress so the regulations could come forward, and then the Commission could decide whether or not to adopt the regulations.

The City Attorney explained that things would work the same way, but the only problem was if it was announced on January 1<sup>st</sup> that a Chapter of the Code was going to be amended, and if an application was submitted the previous year which was ready for approval in late January, the regulation would not be adopted until February and that application would have to be reviewed under the old law.

Commissioner Smith felt this should be considered at some point. Mayor Naugle asked what boundary Commissioner Smith had in mind, and asked if it was everything south of the River. Commissioner Smith stated that he thought the south side of the River was appropriate for City Center zoning, but he felt anything south of 9<sup>th</sup> Street should not have such zoning. Commissioner Smith stated that the residents in that area feared this and could not sign onto the plan because they feared it would affect their suburban life style. He further stated that the people north did not care because there was no neighborhood there, and they were ready for something new, fresh and viable.

Mayor Naugle stated that one reason the people south feared this was because when they adopted the City Center, the City stated they would use good planning principles and step down development on Federal Highway to make it more compatible with the neighborhood, but then different developers brought projects forward which were favored by some of the Commissioners, and it created the fear.

Commissioner Smith stated that was not true. He stated the truth was that the rule needed to be in place. He explained it was the 4-1 rule so developers would know what they could and could not do.

Commissioner Moore asked if there was some way to the South of the River that the neighborhoods' concerns could be narrowed.

Commissioner Hutchinson stated that it needed to go to 6<sup>th</sup> Street and no further which would be part of a transition layer. She felt a transition was not 14 stories, but lower. She gave the Waverly as an example, and stated that a focal point was needed.

Mayor Naugle stated that could be a great historic district. Commissioner Katz stated that one needed to determine what transitional meant. Commissioner Smith suggested this be scheduled for a public hearing.

Bruce Chatterton proposed that everyone look at the zoning boundaries which was included in Phase II of the plan.

Commissioner Smith suggested this be on the agenda for the Commission meeting on January 7, 2003.

Jack Loos, DDA Board Member, stated that he felt it was poor planning and poor government to have something come out and everyone charge down the road trying to see out how it could be figured into place. He believed everyone needed to be more careful in how things were approached. He felt that this type of "ambush government" was very dangerous in regard to the image being projected to the community, and he believed the business community and residents were being put in a dangerous situation. He stated that most responsible developers wanted to cooperate with what the government and community wanted, but he didn't feel that something could be brought up "out of the blue," and that people's rights would be trampled upon. He felt there was a balance that could be accomplished. He did not feel this was the right way to handle this.

Charlie Ladd, DDA Board Member, stated that on a general basis he felt it was obvious that the DDA was the infrastructure arm for the Downtown neighborhood. He explained the DDA had bonding capabilities and had issued a \$10 Million bond, and were undertaking streetscape improvements. He stated that a huge component of this study was infrastructure in terms of parks, greenways, and streetscape. He reiterated that a Steering Committee had been created, and the DDA did not even know who was on that Committee. A study was being done presently by Tom Gustafson and he felt it was a model for consensus building. Mr. Ladd stated that every time he attended one of these meetings, he felt that an auricle was going on which was going to spew all this. He felt they were making a mistake doing things this way because there was an opportunity available to build a consensus to do some creative and exciting things in Downtown. He also stated that he felt the DDA should be at the table working on this plan.

Mr. Kittredge stated that they had begun to see some emerging ideas, but they did not necessarily know where they would end up. He explained they wanted to take this early concept, and with the consensus, make it real and define it. He stated they were beginning to know the community and its players, and were starting to understand the City. He felt the plan would not succeed if it did not have a consensus.

Commissioner Moore stated he was happy to follow Mr. Loos and Mr. Ladd on this matter because he felt that the DDA had paid to be at the table, and they needed to help get this RAC plan implemented and utilize the professionals required to accomplish such a goal. He further stated that the comments made about the density along Las Olas was why he attempted to throw out the "olive branch" of 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue. He felt the density of affordable housing had to be offered in this area. He emphasized that he wanted the DDA at the table, but he also wanted them to assist in the strategy of how the money would be acquired to implement the plan.

Alan Hooper, DDA Board Member, stated that there were stakeholders in the Downtown which did the every day investment, and they needed to think about how to structure the zoning and the building

requirements while doing this Master Plan so they could reinvest in the Downtown. He also stated that they needed to take cues from Palm Beach because it was a City you could look at and say their Master Plan was formed and implemented, such as this group was attempting to do. He continued stating that he was happy with today's presentation and he felt West Palm Beach showed courage because of their willingness to use condemnation to create greenspace and affordable housing. Mr. Hooper stated that 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue was a street which was lacking in investment and landscaping. He felt the Master Plan could include 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue since it ran down to the Avenue of the Arts. He also stated that high density was important when you were trying to create a pedestrian friendly Downtown. He reiterated that having height would be the way to have affordable housing.

Mr. Loos stated that he agreed with Commissioner Moore that it would make sense to look at the under utilized areas from 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue to 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue down to Sunrise. He suggested that both sides of Sunrise be looked at. He stated that as a community they were building expensive condominiums and expensive rentals, but the problem was that they needed to look at what the typical downtown worker employee made and could afford. He continued stating that there was a large gap between what they were supplying and what the people could afford to buy or rent. In his opinion, this had to be a top priority. He stated that the strength of the Downtown was dependent upon the strength and quality of life in the surrounding neighborhoods. He reiterated that the strengths and values of those neighborhoods were heavily dependent upon a successful and vibrant Downtown.

Mr. Loos stated that they were in this together and they needed to work as a team. He felt they needed to look and see how to make this a better place to live and work. He stated that if zoning needed to be looked at, it should be done in an orderly way. He felt if this was politicized, the effort would be hurt for everyone involved. He stated that at the DDA's last board meeting, there appeared to be a strong consensus to aid in the funding of this Master Plan, and they wanted to be part of the solution. He further stated that was their charge and responsibility. He reiterated that the team needed to protect the neighborhoods and the property rights of the people in the Downtown, and encourage them to do more quality development. Mr. Loos stated that the City had benefitted from the boom, but you could run the people willing to invest out of the community if you were not careful. He cautioned everyone to walk carefully.

Commissioner Hutchinson stated that she looked at this Master Plan process as something that was not just about architects and how the Downtown would look, but would address areas they had been complaining about. She further stated that everyone had a vision of what "pedestrian friendly" was, but the Code did not address it. She hoped what came out of this Master Plan would create the streetscapes they were looking for. She felt a buy-in from the development community was necessary, and they needed a seat at the table because they were going to be a key to implementing the plan. She stated that everyone depended on each other. If the neighborhoods were not good, the Downtown would not be good and vice versa. She further stated that they needed a seat at the table also. She felt they had been very parochial on who had a seat at the table so far, and she felt now was the opportunity to open it up.

Commissioner Hutchinson further stated that she felt the wrong thing to do was create a zoning in progress. She explained that she represented the area South of the River and felt this process would get them to where they wanted to go, but by "throwing it to the wind," they would be creating more controversy. She stated that you wanted higher densities in the core of the Downtown, and did not want them stretching into the communities. Commissioner Hutchinson stated that when she looked at the core of the Downtown, it was just a few blocks but she realized the RAC extended further out. She explained they still had controls in relation to zoning the further out you went.

Commissioner Katz stated that the Master Plan was a process to bring everyone to the table. She felt it was important for the DDA to be a partner, and it was necessary for everyone to work together to make it happen. She further stated that the transportation depended on the land use because they worked together. She felt it was important to understand that everyone had a commitment and were interested

and wanted the Downtown to be successful. Everyone wanted work-force housing, but what was frustrating was when a developer came and discussions were held at the dais, instead of having rules and letting things go through the process and not become political. Commissioner Katz stated that JPI and The Lofts were first steps to show the concept could work regarding work-force housing.

Commissioner Smith stated that the reason this City did not have any increase in population for the last 20 years was because it was not a nice place to live. The Downtown was a wreck, nothing was taking place, the beach was made up of T-shirt shops and homeless people, so everyone went West for a better quality of life. He felt this was now a rare opportunity for the City to change things and make the Downtown a wonderful place full of activity. He stated they ran the risk of not taking this opportunity if they did not reach a consensus. He said so many people were afraid of the Downtown redevelopment, and he attempted to find out the root of their objection and if it was real or not. He explained that the only thing he came up with was that the adjacent neighborhoods wanted protection. Commissioner Smith stated they needed to remove that fear so they could move ahead.

Commissioner Smith stated that he felt this presentation had been very well done and that Commissioner Katz should be congratulated in making this happen. He felt there was a substantial product coming out of all of this. He also stated that the DDA needed to be on the Steering Committee whether they contributed funds or not.

Mr. Loos stated that the DDA had indicated they were willing to put funds into this project. Commissioner Smith felt this was an action that should be taken today. He further stated that they still might bring the City Center closer on the south side, but at least they would be at the table to discuss it. He felt the pedestrian bridge was a tremendous idea, and that the south side of the River had been failing just the same as some of the northern neighborhoods. He continued stating that transportation management needed to be at the top of the list.

Commissioner Moore stated that the pedestrian bridge was a unique concept and felt the idea of gondolas was also good. The Downtown South of the River just did not exist at night, and it could be an opportunity to revitalize the area. He felt some of the things he read were contradictory. In the presentation they had stated that it would be a good idea to have restaurants to look onto the water, and he agreed, but by doing that historic buildings would have to be removed and that would never happen. The other issue he was concerned about was the comparison of the Stranahan House and its location between the other developments. He suggested that possibly that historic site would have to be moved closer to other historic sites. He stated that might not be conducive because of the surrounding buildings. He felt they possibly might need to rethink how they were dealing with the Hyde Park Connector regarding green space. He felt there were other opportunities for open green space that would be more massive than what was being considered, and would give a greater connection to the waterway. Commissioner Moore stated if a pedestrian bridge would be done, they might want to look at the possibilities of the connection of the open green space to the Downtown area of the Las Olas Corridor.

Commissioner Moore stated that JPI and The Lofts did meet a certain portion of the work force, but the individuals who could make this work could not go into JPI or The Lofts. In reality, every resident of City View could not purchase property at The Lofts, and those were the individuals that were needed in the Downtown area. He felt on Las Olas that you did not see the retail exchange. He hoped they would look at the garage at the Riverwalk because he felt that would be a good place for an outdoor market for local residents.

Mr. Loos remarked they had tried to have a farmer's market about 2 years ago and could not get through City staff. Commissioner Moore remarked they needed to get through City staff.

Commissioner Moore asked if the DDA had a ballpark figure on what they would be contributing to the project. Mr. Loos replied that staff had not presented them with a number yet. The City Manager stated he

now had a figure for the DDA and a formal request was going to be made.

Commissioner Moore stated that an ordinance was needed for affordable housing so that every developer who built in the City and asked for any variance or density changes to contribute money to make it affordable. A funding cycle was needed to subsidize units for the work force.

Commissioner Hutchinson commended the consultants for their great work and felt a wide variety of people had attended the workshop. She further stated that she hinged on the River because in the past they had always put their back to the River, and it was under utilized. She stated that San Antonio and other areas had done things right, and this City had it but did not use it properly. She asked Cecelia Hollar to speak on the City Center as it extended to the south, and how zoning related to the City Center designation and the RAC applied.

Commissioner Moore left the meeting at approximately 4:17 p.m.

Ms. Hollar stated that they knew there were unspecified heights and density in the City Center, and somewhere in the area they wanted to allow for redevelopment of an intensive, high density core. The question became: What is the type of transition they wanted to see. There had been a pattern and a transition as identified by the consultant. She explained they were working on ways to identify this transition so when you built in the area you would know the acceptable range. She stated that everyone's concern was that a specified height limit would be imposed. She stated there needed to be an agreement on what would be reasonable as a height from the center and transitioning downward. She stated that you did not want benching, and wanted a worthwhile interest.

Ms. Hollar stated that she wanted to remind everyone why they were at this meeting. She explained they did not have to do anything prematurely or without the benefit of a study or analysis. There was breathing room and this was why they embarked on the study before they brought in more units, and wanted everyone's input as to how those units would be allocated so everyone would be in agreement. She felt it should not be first-come/first-serve. There needed to be provisions for what type of product would be provided.

Mr. Hooper stated that his biggest problems in developing within the RAC was Andrews Avenue, and the same problems existed on Third Avenue, Broward Boulevard, and Seventh Avenue. They needed to bring in the County Traffic Engineers to the table because this was a major hurdle for developers. He explained they had to deal with right-of-ways and corner cords and all built to suit Plantation, Florida, and were not built for Downtown Fort Lauderdale.

Mayor Naugle asked who from the County was at the table for this project. Bruce Chatterton replied they were meeting with the County Engineering staff at the next round of technical meetings.

Mr. Ladd reiterated that he had been heavily involved over the last 6 months in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Street Streetscape Project, and the Broward County Engineering Department was the opposite of who they needed to talk to. He stated that the County needed to embrace the fact that they were a major player and landowner in the City, and embrace the idea of urban city streets with streetscape, rather than the County/suburban, right-of-way, hogging model that precluded them from having tree-lined streets.

Mayor Naugle suggested they speak with the District Commissioner.

Commissioner Moore returned to the meeting at 4:25 p.m.

Mr. Loos stated that the DDA would be delighted to have a group create a farmer's market, but there were problems and if a clear direction was taken by the City, they would try it again. He explained it wasn't because staff didn't want to do it, but the problem was the bureaucracy. Commissioner Moore stated he truly believed that would help in getting people on the Riverwalk.

Commissioner Hutchinson stated that Gale Butler and she had spoken about a farmer's market for a Friday afternoon. Mr. Loos stated there had been one years ago in the Downtown parking garage on Saturdays, and it had been quite successful. She felt Fridays were good due to having all the workers in the area. She felt this would utilize more of the green space in the area. Commissioner Moore felt

Wednesdays would be good also.

Mr. Loos stated that it did grade down South of the River and he did not have any objections to relocating the City Center line, but he felt a proper process was needed in order to make it happen. He felt if they were going to provide the quality of housing that was needed, they needed to review the zoning categories which Mr. Greenberg suggested which permitted more of a low-rise, more intense development on the properties. Mr. Hooper suggested they review the landscaping also. Commissioner Smith reiterated that examples had been shown of other cities where this had been accomplished. Mr. Loos felt this should be a top priority. He felt the area Commissioner Moore referred to going down to Sunrise Boulevard would create an opportunity for the City to have more affordable housing. He stated that at the next meeting of the DDA, he was going to suggest they invest extra money into this study to make sure that area got looked at. He felt they needed to reach out of the core areas to figure out how this housing could be provided.

Commissioner Smith stated that he did not feel that the people north of Sunrise Boulevard were looking for high-intensity or high-density housing. Commissioner Moore stated that when you were talking about the density of units on the south side or in the RAC, he felt the size of the units were too large to be affordable.

Mr. Hooper stated that he did not have the luxury of a parking reduction and in a CRA district there was the ability to condemn land and build a parking garage, and this was the step they needed to take.

Mayor Naugle stated that in the Central Business District there was no parking requirement. Mr. Hooper reiterated that he was in the RAC-UV and outside of the Central Business District. Commissioner Moore reiterated that was why he wanted it to be included so changes could be made. Mayor Naugle stated that if there was mass transit, a couple living in an apartment could get by with one car.

Mr. Loos stated that the City needed to be a catalyst and create reservoir parking in the areas.

The City Manager stated that this whole notion of a Downtown Master Plan had started from an inventory which had been done of all the plans that had previously been done. He that the Commission had not yet settled on anything and that this was just Phase I of the project. He stated that he had already met with County staff regarding some issues, and had informed them that they could not do anything without engaging the CRA and the DDA. He proposed to ask the City Commission on December 10, 2002 to name DDA members to the Steering Committee and from the CRA Advisory Board as well. He felt they were moving in the right direction, and a lot of pieces had to be put together, but they would end up with a Master Plan that would see the City through for many, many years.

The City Manager stated that if they listened to what Ms. Hollar had indicated, there was a way to get to 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue without having to violate changes to the Master Plan, and yet accomplish that in an efficient way.

Commissioner Moore stated that if the DDA was willing to contribute funds to make that happen, he had no objections and only wanted to make sure it got done. He felt it was the key to affordable housing.

Art Seitz stated that people gathered today to listen to a plan that was long overdue. He called everyone's attention to an editorial today in the *Miami Herald* that was entitled "Walk on the Dangerous Side." He explained that it basically stated that 228 pedestrians had been killed in Miami and Fort Lauderdale over

the last two years versus 110 in Orlando. He stated that 5 out of 6 "most dangerous pedestrian cities" named in the study were in Florida. He continued stating that Fort Lauderdale had an appalling record regarding pedestrian safety. He suggested that bike lanes were necessary and letters needed to be sent to the FDOT.

Leola McCoy stated that she was concerned because nothing had been mentioned in the studies about environmental issues. She felt they needed to look at the transportation corridors. She further stated they continued to build high-rises along the beach which were destroying the Coral Reef, and putting a "dredge" on the water supply and air quality.

Susan Peterson stated that she hoped there could be a plan to replace the old Downtown YMCA because people from all walks of life had used it. She further stated that air quality was important and she hoped FP&L could be made to do something with their plant. She also stated that she was in favor of the architectural competition specifically for the redesigning of older homes.

Commissioner Moore stated that he sat on the Metropolitan YMCA Board and they were looking for a location in the Downtown area to establish a YMCA. He believed it was a missing point in the area.

Bunney Brenneman, President of the 13<sup>th</sup> Street Merchants Association, stated that they had participated in the workshops for this project and were in favor of the preliminary plan. She stated they would also extend their support in regard to extending out to 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue and north to Sunrise Boulevard.

#### **OB – DRINKING WATER**

Commissioner Smith left the meeting at 4:50 p.m.

Greg Kisela, Assistant City Manager, stated that they took the responsibility for the drinking water, and produced anywhere from 60 million to 75 million gallons of drinking water every day, and the integrity of it was second to none. He further stated that they replaced somewhere between 12 miles to 17 miles of waterlines each year.

Commissioner Katz left the meeting at 4:55 p.m.

Mr. Kisela stated that back in '92-'93 the Commission authorized them to do an enhanced accelerated waterline replacement program where about 175 miles of pipe would be replaced over the next 10 years. He explained that 2/3 of that work was done in-house with City crews. He further stated that they took about 1800 water quality samples a year.

Mayor Naugle asked if they were meeting all the legal requirements.

Mike Bailey, Public Services Department, replied the short answer was yes and that he had spoken personally with the agency which regulated this and was told they were in compliance.

Commissioner Katz returned to the meeting at 4:56 p.m.

Mayor Naugle asked if there were any other agencies that could possibly have different views. Mr. Bailey stated that he had asked if there were any other regulatory agencies that would be concerned with how the City was doing the work, and the answer was no.

Mr. Kisela stated that the Health Department did not permit 50' or less for these types of repairs.

Commissioner Moore asked if Elgin Jones mentioned in the report the Engineering Inspector in the City. Mr. Kisela confirmed. Commissioner Moore asked if the concerns Mr. Jones mentioned in his article

had ever been brought to City staff. Mr. Kisela stated he thought Mr. Jones had conversations with Mr. Bailey.

Mr. Bailey replied that Mr. Jones had questioned him about their practice right before the article appeared. Commissioner Moore asked if Mr. Jones had been the inspector on any of the projects that had been mentioned. Mr. Kisela remarked that in some cases he might have been the inspector, but in other cases he might have been the individual who had been responsible for some of the pressure testing and coordination of the new waterlines installed. Mr. Kisela continued stating that the time frame was predominantly from 1994 to 1998.

Commissioner Hutchinson left the meeting at 4:58 p.m.

Commissioner Moore asked if Mr. Jones had been the inspector on any of the projects, had he taken his concerns to anyone in the City. Mr. Kisela replied he had not. Commissioner Moore stated that if these were quality issues having negative impacts on the consumers of the water, and an inspector had checked the lines and was concerned about the work, he was very concerned why this matter was brought up through the newspaper and not through the City's offices. Mr. Kisela remarked that Mr. Jones was not clear in his conversations with Mr. Bailey whether he was talking as an employee or as a reporter. Mr. Bailey stated that Mr. Jones had mentioned that he was with the Broward Times, but did not say anything about his being concerned.

Mayor Naugle stated that they were not sure if Mr. Jones had been an inspector on any of the jobs. Commissioner Moore reiterated that he would like to know if Mr. Jones had inspected any of the concerned jobs. He felt it was the City's responsibility to know what was happening out in the field, and a way to get that information would be through the inspectors. Commissioner Moore reiterated that he wanted to know if Mr. Jones had inspected the jobs, what had he documented to bring it to their attention for correction. He further stated that if Mr. Jones had brought something to the City's attention, and staff did not act upon a concern, the matter needed to be dealt with, but the City needed to encourage their employees that if they found anything that was a concern to public health, they would not wait 5-6 years to discuss the matter.

Commissioner Moore stated that sometimes there was confusion about issues such as the comment made regarding the \$550 Million bond issue. He asked if everyone knew that was a sewage program. He asked if the department had been reorganized because of the sewage program.

Mr. Kisela explained that they had realigned resources to deal with the Waterworks 2011 and specifically Paul Bohlander had relocated with a number of utility engineers to manage the Capital Improvement Program.

Commissioner Moore stated that he was telling the various civic associations that the City was changing the waterlines and upgrading the system giving them a safer drinking water, and he was concerned that if meantime there had been some process being ignored that no one reported as a concern to the City. Commissioner Moore stated that bothered him deeply.

The City Manager stated that bothered him as well, and one of the things they were unable to ascertain just by reading the article was the timeframe being referenced in the article. He stated that he had distributed to the Commission a copy of a letter from an attorney representing one of the people who had been quoted in the article. The individual had disavowed what was said in the article. Therefore, the City had not yet ascertained the veracity of what had been said so they could check into the matter.

Commissioner Moore asked if this could be discussed with the employee. Mr. Kisela remarked they could bring in the employee and ask him if he would be responsive because the article was written in his capacity as a reporter.



Commissioner Smith asked if they were flushing out the short pieces of pipe. Mr. Kisela stated that Mr. Bailey had explained the process and they were in compliance with all requirements. He further stated that they had flushed the new services and replaced between 600 to 700 new services a year. Commissioner Smith asked if the City had a policy that said they did not sanitize 50' or less. Mr. Bailey stated that 50' or less were flushed out with chlorinated water from the distribution system that was accepted by the Health Department. Commissioner Smith stated that he had been told by some of the crew that the City did not do that, and that it was accepted practice that 50' or less were not sanitized.

He further stated that in sanitizing they would use a more stringent chemical to make sure the pipes were not contaminated. He asked if that was done by other cities and was it an option. Mr. Kisela stated that he was not aware of a municipal or private operation that did that because the inconvenience was tremendous.

Commissioner Moore remarked that when he had received calls yesterday about the article, and everyone made the same point that sanitizing was not being done to smaller portions of the lines. He proceeded to quote certain sections of the article.

Mr. Bailey remarked that they were talking about two different things and the service lines were not swabbed if 1" in diameter. Commissioner Moore reiterated that he was referring to 2" and larger. Mr. Bailey said they did sanitize for that size.

Frank Coulter, Deputy Utilities Director, explained that when a new service of 40', 2" polyethylene tubing was installed and flushed, he asked the Health Department if there was any agency which would have a problem with their procedure. He was told there would be no problem.

Commissioner Moore felt the public should have an opportunity to question the City about this article and their process. He stated that he was also concerned with the falsification of the sampling and asked if the process was checked.

Susan Chen, Public Services Department, stated that she had supervised the lab for 21 years and no one had ever asked her to falsify test results.

Kenny Smith, Public Services Department, stated that once a water main was installed there was a pressure test and once it passed, they notified Jerry Hill and then the line would be chlorinated. He stated that there were times things got frustrating due to the lines not always passing.

Commissioner Moore asked Mr. Smith if anyone had ever told him that he should turn his head and turn the lines on no matter what. Mr. Smith replied no. Commissioner Moore reiterated that the allegations made in the article needed to be checked.

Mr. Kisela stated that if someone was falsifying laboratory results that was a criminal issue. He explained that Ms. Chen's laboratory was certified by the State, the County and the EPA. Mr. Kisela reiterated how much water was dealt with daily. Mr. Coulter stated that if anything was wrong with the samples, the following month there would be evidence showing there was a problem.

Commissioner Smith remarked that the article was alleging that people were committing fraud regarding the testing of water and that citizens were in danger. He felt they should ask the State Attorney to investigate the matter. Commissioner Moore stated that he did not want to do that, but wanted to ask the Department of Health at the County level to review the evaluation process. Commissioner Smith stated that he did not think that this could just be let go because they were serious allegations. Commissioner Moore reiterated that he was saying go to the County in addition to pursuing the State Attorney's opinion.

Leola McCoy stated that she had spoken with the Department of Health and also served on a State Board

which advised the Department, and stated her concern was not about the overall process but about protocol. She stated the work force talked to the residents but were scared to speak to the Commission. She stated that Virgil Bolden was scared to death and had spoken on this matter about 2 years ago and was now a retired City employee.

Commissioner Moore asked if Mr. Bolden was to come to the Commission and state what he had seen regarding past practices that were public health issues, would he lose his pension. The City Attorney replied his pension would not be in danger.

Mayor Naugle stated they needed to have an independent investigation so people would have confidence in the quality of their drinking water.

Commissioner Moore suggested this be on the Commission's agenda for the December 10, 2002 meeting at 6:00 p.m. Commissioner Smith suggested that an outside agency do the investigation. Commissioner Moore stated that once results were received they should make the public aware through a public hearing process, but asked they speak to the City employee involved. He stated that he was shocked that a professional was not bringing this matter forth to the attention of the City.

Mayor Naugle stated they appreciated the job that was being done out there, but an independent review was necessary.

There being no further business to come before the Commission, the meeting was adjourned at 5:23 p.m.